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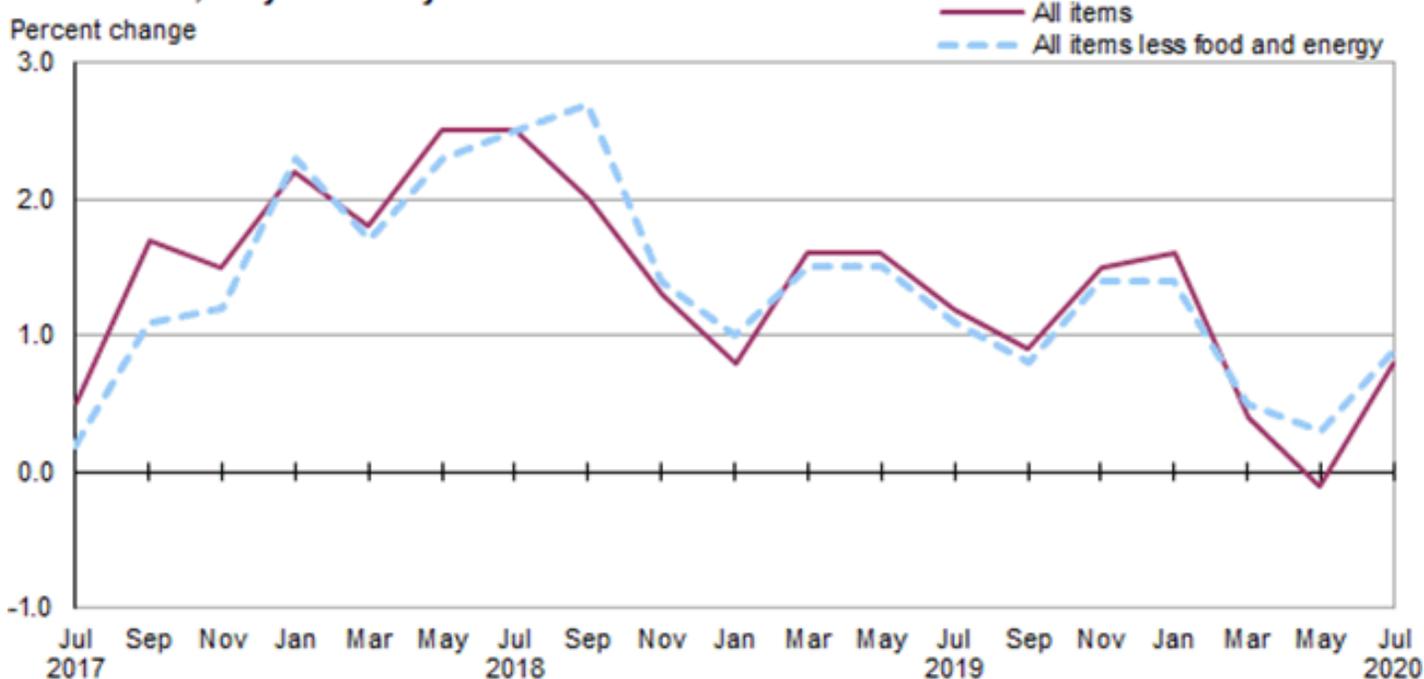
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Consumer Price Index, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria – July 2020 **Area prices up 0.6 percent since May, 0.8 percent over the year**

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria advanced 0.6 percent from May to July, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau’s regional commissioner, noted that the recent increase was due to increases in the energy index, up 7.5 percent, and the all items less food and energy index, up 0.4 percent; the food index decreased 0.3 percent over the month. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes may reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 0.8 percent, due largely to a 0.9-percent rise in the all items less food and energy index. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Since July 2019, the food index also increased, up 3.6 percent, while the energy index decreased 8.7 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, July 2017–July 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Food

Following a 2.7-percent increase from March to May, the food index declined 0.3 percent over the last two months. Prices for food at home decreased 1.1 percent, while those for food away from home rose 0.6 percent. Within the food at home component, prices were lower for carbonated drinks and uncooked beef steaks, while prices were higher for milk and citrus fruits, among others.

Food prices increased 3.6 percent over the year. Prices were higher for both food away from home (3.9 percent) and for food at home (3.4 percent) since July 2019.

Energy

Since May, the energy index, which includes prices for household and transportation fuels, advanced 7.5 percent, due almost entirely to higher prices for gasoline (12.0 percent). Prices were also higher for electricity (3.7 percent) and for utility (piped) gas service (6.2 percent) over the past two months.

Energy prices decreased 8.7 percent since July 2019, due to a drop in gasoline prices, down 17.8 percent. Over the year, prices also declined for electricity, down 1.4 percent, while prices were higher for utility (piped) gas service, up 6.1 percent.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.4 percent since May. The advance was led by higher prices for motor vehicle insurance (25.2 percent) and new and used motor vehicles (2.3 percent) over the last two months. Lower prices for several categories, including recreation (-5.3 percent), moderated the decrease in the all items less food and energy index from May to July.

Since July 2019, the index for all items less food and energy rose 0.9 percent. Prices were higher for shelter (2.4 percent) and medical care (7.1 percent), among others. Prices decreased for recreation (-5.9 percent) and apparel (-8.5 percent) since July 2019.

Table A. Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, CPI-U 2-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	2-month	12-month								
January.....	-0.2	1.5	0.2	1.5	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.8	0.5	1.6
March.....	0.8	1.1	0.4	1.1	-0.1	1.8	0.7	1.6	-0.4	0.4
May.....	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.7	2.5	0.6	1.6	0.1	-0.1
July.....	-0.2	1.3	0.0	0.5	0.1	2.5	-0.3	1.2	0.6	0.8
September.....	-0.3	0.5	0.9	1.7	0.4	2.0	0.1	0.9		
November.....	0.2	1.1	0.0	1.5	-0.7	1.3	-0.2	1.5		

The Consumer Price Index for August 2020 is scheduled to be released on Friday, September 11, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on July 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in July was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index for Washington-Arlington-Alexandria is published bi-monthly. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 94 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater

volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **Note: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MA-WV, Core Based Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; the counties of Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's in Maryland; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren in Virginia; and the county of Jefferson in West Virginia.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted)

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	May 2020	Jun. 2020	Jul. 2020	Jul. 2019	May 2020	Jun. 2020
All items.....		265.733		267.287	0.8	0.6	
Food and beverages		262.716		260.635	3.0	-0.8	
Food		268.742		268.037	3.6	-0.3	
Food at home		258.490	255.967	255.629	3.4	-1.1	-0.1
Cereals and bakery products		331.780		335.828	3.6	1.2	
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....		288.337		286.655	8.0	-0.6	
Dairy and related products		248.392		250.465	5.3	0.8	
Fruits and vegetables		274.317		264.208	-3.6	-3.7	
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)		230.958		220.787	-1.4	-4.4	
Other food at home		209.750		209.735	6.4	0.0	
Food away from home.....		283.206		284.894	3.9	0.6	
Alcoholic beverages		204.642		191.843	-3.7	-6.3	
Housing		281.831		283.053	1.8	0.4	
Shelter		340.432	338.974	340.344	2.4	0.0	0.4
Rent of primary residence		376.139	377.257	378.325	3.4	0.6	0.3
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2).....		347.301	347.867	349.222	2.7	0.6	0.4
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2)		347.301	347.867	349.222	2.7	0.6	0.4
Fuels and utilities.....		235.985		243.811	0.8	3.3	
Household energy		182.153	190.874	189.831	0.5	4.2	-0.5
Energy services.....		186.651	195.896	194.872	0.7	4.4	-0.5
Electricity		206.758	217.560	214.326	-1.4	3.7	-1.5
Utility (piped) gas service		138.659	144.617	147.257	6.1	6.2	1.8
Household furnishings and operations.....		109.108		111.171	-1.3	1.9	
Apparel		145.728		143.903	-8.5	-1.3	
Transportation		199.491		210.230	-4.4	5.4	
Private transportation		200.810		213.036	-2.3	6.1	
New and used motor vehicles(3).....		92.793		94.968	-0.3	2.3	
New vehicles(1).....		193.697		195.712	0.5	1.0	
Used cars and trucks(1)		296.938		303.564	-0.5	2.2	
Motor fuel		185.973	198.696	207.955	-17.8	11.8	4.7
Gasoline (all types).....		183.554	196.312	205.578	-17.8	12.0	4.7
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4).....		177.454	190.077	199.234	-18.4	12.3	4.8
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5).....		196.620	208.960	218.545	-13.1	11.2	4.6
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4).....		209.387	221.698	230.634	-13.3	10.1	4.0
Motor vehicle insurance(1).....		716.556		897.449	6.1	25.2	
Medical care		494.352		494.021	7.1	-0.1	
Recreation(3).....		116.638		110.476	-5.9	-5.3	
Education and communication(3).....		153.315		154.625	2.7	0.9	
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1).....		1,408.013		1,414.752	2.0	0.5	
Other goods and services		421.483		431.885	3.0	2.5	
Commodity and service group							
Commodities		178.880		180.172	-0.7	0.7	

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) (not seasonally adjusted) - Continued

Expenditure category	Indexes				Percent change from		
	Historical data	May 2020	Jun. 2020	Jul. 2020	Jul. 2019	May 2020	Jun. 2020
Commodities less food and beverages		137.058		139.926	-3.6	2.1	
Nondurables less food and beverages...		176.585		181.533	-6.0	2.8	
Durables		98.872		100.188	-0.8	1.3	
Services.....		345.058		346.798	1.7	0.5	
Special aggregate indexes							
All items less shelter.....		235.921		238.006	0.0	0.9	
All items less medical care		254.935		256.577	0.3	0.6	
Commodities less food.....		140.240		142.307	-3.6	1.5	
Nondurables		219.595		220.728	-0.7	0.5	
Nondurables less food.....		179.438		182.291	-5.8	1.6	
Services less rent of shelter(2).....		361.365		365.237	0.6	1.1	
Services less medical care services.....		329.913		331.857	0.7	0.6	
Energy		187.699	198.353	201.787	-8.7	7.5	1.7
All items less energy		274.879		275.627	1.4	0.3	
All items less food and energy		277.075		278.127	0.9	0.4	

Footnotes

- (1) Indexes on a November 1977=100 base.
- (2) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.
- (3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.
- (4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.
- (5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.